

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough consideration provided the present application. Claims 1-5, 7 and 8 are now present in the application. Claims 1-5, 7 and 8 have been amended. Claim 6 has been cancelled. Claims 1, 7 and 8 are independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Priority Under 35 U.S.C. § 119

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, and receipt of the certified priority document.

Information Disclosure Citation

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the references supplied with the Information Disclosure Statement filed on August 9, 2006, and for providing Applicants with an initialed copy of the PTO/SB/08 form filed therewith.

Drawings

The Examiner did not indicate whether or not the formal drawings have been accepted. Since no objection has been received, Applicants assume that the drawings are acceptable and that no further action is necessary. Confirmation thereof in the next Office Action is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 & 103

Claims 1, 3, 4, 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hirayanagi, U.S. Patent No. 6,445,804. Claims 5 and 6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hirayanagi in view of Amir, U.S. Patent No. 7,130,705. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

In light of the foregoing amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that these rejections have been obviated and/or rendered moot. Without conceding to the propriety of the Examiner's rejections, but merely to timely advance the prosecution of the application, as the Examiner will note, independent claims 1, 7 and 8 have been amended.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a combination of elements including "a voice recognition and generation device for performing voice recognition on a voice detected by a voice detecting device, and for generating a voice signal" and "when starting or ending generating said voice signal, said voice recognition and generation device sends a talk event signal to the automatic gain control device so as to respectively start measuring or stop measuring said distance between said moving object and said target."

Independent claim 7 has been amended to recite a combination of steps including "generating a voice signal by a voice recognition and generation device to be modulated as the modulated signal", "estimating a distance between said moving object and said target on the basis of said determined time" and "when starting or ending generating said voice signal, said voice recognition and generation device sends a talk event signal so as to respectively start or end the estimating step."

Independent claim 8 has been amended to recite a combination of elements including “a voice recognition and generation device for performing voice recognition on a voice detected by a voice detecting device, and for generating a voice signal to be modulated as the modulated signal” and “when starting or ending generating said voice signal, said voice recognition and generation device sends a talk event signal to the distance detecting means so as to respectively start measuring or stop measuring said distance between said moving object and said target.”

Support for the above combinations of elements and steps can be found at least in FIG. 8 and paragraphs [0047] and [0049] of the specification as originally filed. Applicants respectfully submit that the above combinations of elements and steps set forth in claims 1, 7 and 8 are not disclosed or suggested by the references relied on by the Examiner.

Although the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action alleged that Hirayanagi discloses a voice recognition and generation device as recited in original claim 6, the Examiner fails to specify where and how Hirayanagi discloses this feature (see Office Action, page 5, lines 14-20). As best understood, Hirayanagi in FIGs. 1-8 discloses ultra-directional speaker systems including a speech generator 10/101/102 and a modulator 30/131 to modulate the voice signal output by the speech generator to be a modulated signal to be output by the acoustic reflector 2. Therefore, it seems that Hirayanagi's speech generator 10/101/102 may generate a voice signal to be modulated by the modulator 30/131 as a modulated voice signal. However, as shown in FIGs. 1, 6, 7 and 8, Hirayanagi's speech generator 10/101/102 does not send any signal to the difference circuit 5 to start or stop measure of the distance between the listener and the system. In fact, as shown in FIGs. 1, 6, 7 and 8, Hirayanagi's speech generator 10/101/102 does not send out any signal other than the voice signal, and does not send out any signal to any element other than the modulator 30. The only output of Hirayanagi's speech generator 10/101/102 is the

voice signal, and is only sent to the modulator 30/131. Therefore, Hirayanagi fails to teach “when starting or ending generating said voice signal, *said voice recognition and generation device sends a talk event signal to the automatic gain control device so as to respectively start measuring or stop measuring said distance between said moving object and said target*” as recited in claim 1, “when starting or ending generating said voice signal, *said voice recognition and generation device sends a talk event signal so as to respectively start or end the estimating step.*” as recited in claim 7, and “when starting or ending generating said voice signal, *said voice recognition and generation device sends a talk event signal to the distance detecting means so as to respectively start measuring or stop measuring said distance between said moving object and said target.*” as recited in claim 8.

In addition, Hirayanagi is simply directed to an ultra-directional speaker system. However, Hirayanagi nowhere discloses a moving object equipped with ultra-directional speaker system in the moving object itself, as recited in claims 1, 7 and 8.

With regard to the Examiner’s reliance on Amir, this reference also fails to disclose the above combinations of elements and steps as set forth in amended independent claims 1, 7 and 8. Accordingly, this reference fails to cure the deficiencies of Hirayanagi.

Accordingly, neither Hirayanagi nor Amir individually or in combination teaches or suggests the limitations of amended independent claims 1, 7 and 8. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claims 1, 7 and 8 clearly define over the teachings of Hirayanagi and Amir.

In addition, claims 2-5 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1, and are therefore allowable based on their respective dependence from independent claim 1, which is believed to be allowable.

In view of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-5, 7 and 8 clearly define the present invention over the references relied on by the Examiner. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103 are respectfully requested.

Additional Cited References

Since the remaining patents cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but rather to merely show the state of the art, no further comments are necessary with respect thereto.

CONCLUSION

All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed and/or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently pending rejections and that they be withdrawn.

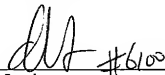
It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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